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Commission for Social Development
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Agenda item 3 (c)
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: emerging issues: the social drivers of sustainable development

Bolivia (Plurinational State of):*, draft resolution**

The Commission for Social Development recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Visual health as a tool for achievement of the empowerment of people

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 68/98 and other previous resolutions related to global health and foreign policy,

Reaffirming the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, without discrimination as to race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition, and the right of everyone to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one's family,

Mindful that the World Health Organization estimates that 285 million people worldwide live with visual impairment and that the two main causes of visual impairment are uncorrected refractive errors and cataracts, and that such impairments are more frequent among older persons and poorer segments of the population,

Recalling resolution 66.4 of the World Health Assembly entitled "Towards universal eye health: a global action plan 2014-2019", which states that 80 per cent of all visual impairments can be prevented or cured and that about 90 per cent of the world's visually impaired live in developing countries, as well as other World

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

** In accordance with rule 69 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

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Health Assembly resolutions that acknowledge the links between poverty and blindness, and that blindness places a heavy economic burden on families, communities and countries, particularly developing countries,

Recognizing that poverty can affect vulnerable people living with visual impairments and increase their likelihood of not having access to basic health, education and social services and thereby make them more vulnerable to isolation, ill health and economic problems,

Stressing the importance of the Global Action Plan 2014-2019 on Universal Eye Health, which encourages the development and implementation of integrated national eye health policies, plans and programmes to enhance universal eye health and promotes effective partnerships to strengthen eye health, respecting the interrelated principles of universal access and equity, human rights, evidence-based practice, a life course approach and empowerment of people with visual impairment,

1. *Recognizes* that people affected by vision impairments should be able to participate fully in the social, economic, political and cultural aspects of society;

2. *Recognizes* the leading role of the World Health Organization as the primary specialized agency for health, including its role and functions with regard to health policy in accordance with its mandate;

3. *Encourages* Governments to develop and to strengthen eye-care services and to integrate them into the existing health-care system at all levels, in order to promote the best possible vision for all people, thereby contributing to improving quality of life and favourable economic, social and health conditions for individuals and society;

4. *Welcomes* the World Intellectual Property Organization Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works For Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, signed in Morocco on 27 June 2013, the first international treaty to focus on copyright exceptions to facilitate the creation of accessible versions of books and other copyrighted works, recognizing its potential to promote the empowerment of and access to education by visually impaired persons, and encourages Member States to consider its ratification;

5. *Acknowledges* that visual health contributes significantly to the quality of life and empowerment of all members of society, including women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and people living in vulnerable situations, through enhancing their capacities to respond to the challenges posed owing to sight deficiency by enabling them to combat poverty in relation to the opportunities of decent work, social inclusion and poverty eradication;

6. *Encourages* Governments to develop and to strengthen partnerships between the public sector, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society and community programmes and activities oriented at providing comprehensive eye-care services to all people, with the aim also to promote social inclusion;

7. *Encourages* States and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen their collaboration and partnership towards the implementation of the Global Action Plan 2014-2019 on Universal Eye Health, taking into account the linkages between visual health and empowerment and participation for social inclusion;

8. *Takes note* of the discussions regarding social drivers for sustainable development as the emerging issue of 2014, and recognizes the relevance of visual health in this regard;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit the content of the present resolution to the World Health Organization.